

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AF-10 EA-10
NEA-11 OIC-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04
NSAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05
HEW-04 /150 W

-----001581 270115Z /63

R 260032Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0513

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 08865

FOR LABOR OFFICERS ADDRESSEE POSTS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ICFTU, ILO, ELAB, MX

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SUBJECT: ORIT VERSION OF EVENTS OF ICFTU BOARD MEETING

REF: BRUSSELS 10217

1. LABOR ATTACHE MET WITH ORIT GEN-SECY JUAN JOSE DEL
PINO MAY 23 ON HIS RETURN FROM HAMBURG (PROTECT ALL FOL-
LOWING). HE REPORTED MUCH THE SAME CONTAINED IN REFTEL
AND ALSO DESCRIBED A SERIOUS CONTROVERSY WHICH CANNOT

HELP BUT AFFECT THE ICFTU-ORIT RELATIONSHIP.

2. BACKGROUND: AT THE TIME OF ORIT MEETING HELD BEFORE THE AFL-CIO CONVENTION IN DECEMBER 1977 IN LOS ANGELES, DEL PINO SIGNED AN AGREEMENT WITH AIFLD WHICH PROVIDED A 106-THOUSAND-DOLLAR GRANT TO ORIT. ICFTU GEN SEC KERSTEN OBJECTED TO THIS BECAUSE A 1977 ICFTU RESOLUTION STATED THAT ALL "EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS BE APPROVED BY THE ORIT FINALLY AGREED TO "BRING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF" THE ICFTU ANY SUCH GRANTS. THERE WERE FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ORIT AND ICFTU TO INSURE THAT SUCH FUNDS WOULD BE EXPENDED IN PROGRAMS WHICH WOULD NOT DUPLICATE THE EFFORTS OF THOSE OF THE ICFTU. DEL PINO WENT TO HAMBURG WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT KERSTEN WOULD PRESENT AND RECOMMEND A RESOLUTION OF APPROVAL AND THAT PASSAGE WOULD BE A FORMALITY. END BACKGROUND.

3. AT HAMBURG MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE (WITH THE ONLY LATIN AMERICAN MEMBER, FIDEL VELASQUEZ, ABSENT) THE SWEDISH LO MEMBER WHO WAS CHAIRING SESSION PRESENTED A LETTER FROM HIS ORGANIZATION WHICH OBJECTED TO ORIT'S USE OF THE MONEY, QUESTIONED THE PROPRIETY OF AFL-CIO AFFILIATION TO ORIT WHEN IT WAS NOT AFFILIATED TO THE PARENT ICFTU, AND HINTED THAT LO VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ORIT OR ICFTU MIGHT STOP IF USE OF THE GRANT WAS APPROVED.

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4. WHEN THE ISSUE HIT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IT TOUCHED OFF A THREE AND ONE-HALF HOUR DEBATE. DEL PINO SAYS HE WAS SHOCKED AT HARSH TONE OF CRITICISM OF AFL-CIO OFFERED BY SWEDISH AND DUTCH SPEAKERS. HE CLAIMS HE STRONGLY DEFENDED USE OF THE GRANT AND ACCUSED THE OPPONENTS OF HARBORING A GRUDGE AGAINST THE AFL-CIO, WHICH THEY DID NOT HAVE THE COURAGE TO CONFRONT DIRECTLY. THE MOTION (TO DENY APPROVAL FOR USE OF GRANT) CARRIED WITH ENGLAND, THE SCANDINAVIANS AND HOLLAND VOTING FOR, AND CANADA, GERMANY AND ITALY VOTING AGAINST (THE MOTION).

5. DEL PINO MADE IT KNOWN THAT HE HAD ONLY CONSENTED TO THE APPROVAL PROCESS IN INTEREST OF HARMONY. HE CLAIMS THAT AFTER THE SESSION (SOUNDED LIKE) STEEN SILLEMAN APPROACHED HIM SUGGESTING THAT IF HE WOULD SEND GRANT BACK TO AIFLD HE (SILLEMAN), AS DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, WOULD SEE THAT ORIT GOT 100 THOUSAND DOLLARS FROM ICFTU TO REPLACE IT. DEL PINO WAS FURIOUS THAT "SILLEMAN AND HIS ALLIES DO NOT REALIZE THE ISSUE IS ONE OF PRINCIPLE, RATHER THAN MONEY." "WE PREFER OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GRINGOS WITHOUT MONEY, TO ONE WITH ICFTU WITH MONEY."

6. HE THEN INFORMED SILLEMAN THAT HE WOULD USE GRANT AS HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN PLANNED, AND THAT ANY ICFTU REPUDIATION OF THIS ACTION WOULD BE CONSIDERED REPUDIATION OF DEL PINO. IF THIS HAPPENED HE WOULD RESIGN HIS ORIT OFFICE AND RETURN TO VENEZUELA. HE CLAIMS HE TOLD SILLEMAN THAT ICFTU HAS NO RIGHT TO BLOCK ANY ACTION AGREED UPON AMONG AFFILIATES OF ORIT AND THAT THIS WAS THE "FIRST AND LAST TIME ORIT WOULD SUBMIT ANY SUCH PROJECT FOR 'THE KNOWLEDGE OF' (THE NEGOTIATED PHRASE) THE ICFTU." SILLEMAN LATER ARRANGED TO TABLE THE ISSUE ON THE PRETEXT THAT THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS HAD NOT HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY THE AIFLD-ORIT CONTRACT.

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CORRECTED COPY (TEXT, PARA 10)

7. DEL PINO SAYS HE MET WITH ORIT DELEGATES LATER AND
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OBTAINED THEIR CONCURRENCE THAT ORIT SHOULD ACCEPT THE
GRANT AND PROCEED WITH THE PROGRAM AS PLANNED. THEY
REPORTEDLY URGED HIM "NOT EVEN TO CONSIDER RESIGNATION."

8. SUSPENSION OF URUGUAYAN CGTU. DEL PINO SAYS THE ORIT
DELEGATES CAUCUSED AND AGREED TO REQUEST THAT ANY ACTION
ON SUSPENSION OF THE URUGUAYAN CGTU BE WITHHELD FOR SIX
MONTHS FOR STUDY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE ACTION.
THE DEBATE ON THE ISSUE IN THE GENERAL SESSION WENT WELL,
UNTIL A LETTER OF SUPPORT WHICH DEL GAUDIO HAD SENT TO
PRESIDENT OF URUGUAY LAST YEAR WAS READ. THIS UNDERMINED
MUCH OF THE SUPPORT FOR THE ORIT POSITION. A RESOLUTION
TO SUSPEND THE CGTU IMMEDIATELY AND REVIEW THE SITUATION
IN SIX MONTHS WAS PASSED.

9. COMMENT: FROM OUR LIMITED PERSPECTIVE IT APPEARS THAT
THE ICFTU-ORIT RELATIONSHIP WHICH DEL PINO HAS SO CARE-
FULLY TENDED HAS BEEN DAMAGED SOMEWHAT. IT IS HARD TO
SAY JUST HOW MUCH. DEL PINO, WHILE HE APPEARS TO HAVE
COOLED OFF SOME, SINCE HIS RETURN TO MEXICO, STILL SEEMS
DETERMINED TO RUN HIS OWN SHOW THE WAY ORIT AFFILIATES
WANT. WE DO NOT THINK HE WILL MAKE THE FIRST OVERTURES
TO PATCH UP THE RELATIONSHIP, BUT WILL PROBABLY RESPOND
IN A PRACTICAL MANNER IF SINCERE EFFORT TO MAKE AMENDS IS
MADE BY THE EUROPEANS. HE APPEARS TO BE VERY DISAPPOINTED
THAT HIS YEAR-LONG EFFORT TO IMPROVE ORIT-ICFTU RELATIONS
HAS PRODUCED NO MORE THAN THE SKIRMISH OF HAMBURG. WE DO
NOT HOWEVER THINK HE IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING
RESIGNING HIS ORIT POSITION.

10. FROM EVENTS DEL PINO DESCRIBES TO US, WE FIND IT DIF-
FICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE EFFORT MADE BY SWEDEN-HOLLAND-
ENGLAND. ORIT AFFILIATES CLEARLY SIGNALLED THEIR PREFERENCE
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FOR AFL-CIO TO ICFTU IN THE MEXICO CITY CONGRESS IN 1975.
IT APPEARS THAT THESE THREE AFLD-PHOBES FAILED TO GET
THE MESSAGE. THEY CERTAINLY DROVE ORIT FARTHER FROM THEIR

SPERE OF INFLUENCE WITH THEIR HAMBURG PERFORMANCE. IF
THEIR ACTIONS AFTER THE 1975 REBUFF ARE A GUIDE, THE ICFTU
WILL SHORTLY AGAIN BE CROSSING THE WATERS TO LATIN AMERICA
WITH HAT AND CHECKBOOK IN HAND. LUCEY

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